

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5283
INFO CSCE CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USIA WASHDC
USCINCUEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 1371

FOR EUR/RPM AND EUR/SOV FROM USDEL CSCE

GENEVA FOR USDEL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE OCON
SUBJ: BELGRADE CSCE: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS, FEBRUARY 11-17

SUMMARY: THERE WAS A PROFUSION OF DRAFT CONCLUDING
DOCUMENTS ABOUT THE SAVA CENTER THIS WEEK BUT VIRTUALLY
NO NEGOTIATION. FORMAL DRAFTING GROUPS WERE FORUMS
FOR EAST AND WEST TO EXCHANGE CHARGES THAT OTHER SIDE
WAS ONE DELAYING PROGRESS. INFORMAL CONTACT GROUPS
VIRTUALLY PETERED OUT, AND SOVIETS, TO DRIVE HOME POINT
THAT THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS IN
THAT FORUM, REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MORE INFORMAL
BASKET THREE SESSIONS. IN MEANTIME, SOVIETS FILED
TWO FURTHER REVISIONS OF THEIR DRAFT OF A CONCLUDING
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DOCUMENT WHICH APPEARED DESIGNED TO CONTRIBUTE TO ILLUSION
THAT, WITH CONSPICUOUS EXCEPTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, SOVIETS
WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT LENGTHY, SUBSTANTIVE DOCUMENT.
FRENCH LAUNCHED A UNILATERAL COMPROMISE INITIATIVE ON
DIRECTION OF PRESIDEN GISCARD THAT REVEALED FISSURES IN
ALLIED UNITY AND APPEARED UNLIKELY AT END OF WEEK TO DRAW
SOVIETS INTO REAL NEGOTIATIONS. REST OF ALLIES HAVE AGREED

ON A COMMON DRAFT CONCLUDING DOCUMENT THAT WE EXPECT TO PUT IN EARLY NEXT WEEK IN EFFORT TO MARK FOR PUBLIC COMMON SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS WEST HAS BEEN WORKING FOR AT BELGRADE AND TO SET COURSE FOR MADRID, NEUTRAL/NON-ALIGNED, WHOSE OWN COMPROMISE PAPER HAS NEVER REALLY GOTTEN OFF GROUND BECAUSE OF SOVIET REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE ITS CENTRAL PORTIONS, ARE UNDECIDED WHETHER TO MODIFY THEIR DRAFT SUBSTANTIALLY, BUT NO ONE IS OPTIMISTIC AT THIS STAGE THAT MEETING CAN END WITH MUCH MORE THAN SHORT COMMUNIQUE. WEST BELIEVES THIS WOULD NOT MEAN A FAILURE OF MEETING, BUT TASK WILL BE TO HAVE THAT MESSAGE UNDERSTOOD BY WIDER PUBLIC. END SUMMARY.

1. THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT THERE WILL YET BE TRUE NEGOTIATIONS TO PRODUCE A BALANCED, SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT FOR THE BELGRADE MEETING ARE BECOMING HARDER TO FIND AT THE SAVA CENTER. NNA INITIATIVE, LAUNCHED ON FEBRUARY 1, HAS FAILED TO FIND COMMON GROUND BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. THE INFORMAL CONTACT GROUPS PUT INTO OPERATION TO ASSIST THAT INITIATIVE AND THE MINI-CONTACT GROUPS INTO WHICH THEY EVOLVED WHEN AN EVEN MORE INTIMATE AND CONFIDENTIAL ATMOSPHERE WAS SOUGHT HAVE ABOUT RUN THEIR COURSE. IN A DEMONSTRATIVE GESTURE TAKEN, AMBASSADOR VORONTSOV SAID, TO KILL "ILLUSIONS" THAT SOVIETS WOULD EVER COMPROMISE BASIC POINTS OF PRINCIPLE, SOVIETS REFUSED FEBRUARY 15, TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MORE BASKET THREE INFORMALS. THE OTHER CONTACT GROUPS HAVE GONE ON IN DESULTORY FASHION, BUT CONFIDENTIAL

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EAST HAS INDICATED THEY SHOULD END WITH CLOSE OF PRESENT WORK PROGRAM FEBRUARY 17. THERE MAY BE A FEW MORE SESSIONS OF AT LEAST CBMS GROUP, INTO WHICH NNA HAVE SOUGHT TO INJECT SOME LIFE BY MODIFYING THEIR PAPER FEBRUARY 17 TO PROPOSE POST-BELGRADE EXPERTS MEETING TO DEAL WITH FOUR CBM NEW PROPOSALS INCLUDING SOVIET MANEUVER CEILING IDEA. IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT CONTACT GROUP CONCEPT, AT LEAST AT PRESENT STAGE, HAS MUCH TO OFFER.

2. BOTH SOVIETS AND ALLIES WERE MORE INTERESTED DURING PAST WEEK IN POSITIONING THEMSELVES TO BE ABLE TO CLAIM THAT IT WAS THE OTHER SIDE THAT WOULD BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAILURE TO PRODUCE A SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT. SOVIETS HAVE, OF COURSE, AN EXTREMELY WEAK HAND, BUT THEY HAVE BEEN PLAYING IT WELL AND THEY ARE ASSISTED BY EASE

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WITH WHICH THEY CAN COORDINATE THEIR HANDFUL OF LOYAL
WARSAW PACT SUPPORTERS (A GROUP WHICH INCREASINGLY
CLEARLY DOES NOT INCLUDE ROMANIA). COUNTING MOST RECENT
PAPERS PUT FORWARD AT PLENARIES FEBRUARY 14 AND 17, SOVIETS
HAVE INTRODUCED FOUR VARIANTS OF A CONCLUDING DOCUMENT,
EACH ONE LARGER THAN PREVIOUS. THEY HAVE MOVED UP FROM A
THREE PAGE PROPOSAL ON JANUARY 17 TO TWELVE PAGES A MONTH
LATER. THE ADDITIONS HAVE BEEN EITHER GENERAL AND FACTUAL
LANGUAGE AGREED INFORMALLY IN THE VARIOUS DRAFTING GROUPS
OR SOVIET VARIANTS OF DETENTE, MILITARY, BASKET TWO AND
BASKET THREE MATERIAL PROPOSED AND REJECTED IN THE DRAFTING
OR CONTACT GROUPS. THE TOTAL PACKAGE IS CLEARLY SLANTED
TOWARD SOVIET POINT OF VIEW, BUT TO CASUAL READER
IT WOULD LOOK FAIRLY IMPRESSIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE -- WITH
NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND BASKET THREE HUMAN
CONTACTS WHICH ARE VIRTUALLY COMPLETELY ABSENT.
SOVIETS HAVE SUPPLEMENTED THIS STRATEGY BY INSISTING IN
EVERY DRAFTING GROUP MEETING THAT IT IS TIME TO
REGISTER FORMALLY TEXTS THAT HAVE BEEN AGREED, REJECT ONCE
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AND FOR ALL THOSE WHICH CANNOT RECEIVE CONSENSUS AND BRING
TO AN END MEETING THAT HAS ALREADY EXCEEDED "MID-FEBRUARY"
TARGET CLOSING DATE.

3. ALLIES HAVE TO SOME EXTENT BEEN PUT ON DEFENSIVE

BY THIS STRATEGY. WE HAVE HAD TO INSIST IN DRAFTING GROUPS THAT IT IS POINTLESS TO REGISTER BITS AND PIECES OF A CONCLUDING DOCUMENT. REAL NEED IS TO START SERIOUS NEGOTIATION ON DIFFICULT TEXTS. IN CONTACT GROUPS, PARTICULARLY IN BASKET TWO WHERE SOVIETS APPEAR READY TO NEGOTIATE REASONABLY SUBSTANTIVE FEW PAGES, WE HAVE AT TIMES HAD TO DELAY CONSENSUS ARTIFICIALLY ON TEXTS OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE TO DENY SOVIETS MORE MATERIAL FOR THEIR REGISTRATION MILL. WHILE WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BLOCK BOTH REGISTRATION OR INFORMAL AGREEMENT ON MANY MORE SECONDARY TEXTS BY DENYING CONSENSUS, WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO GET SOVIETS TO WORK ON KEY HUMAN RIGHTS AND BASKET THREE AREAS.

4. ALLIES ARE UNIFIED IN BELIEF THAT WEST SHOULD TAKE A MORE OFFENSIVE POSTURE. THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT, HOWEVER, ON HOW THIS CAN BEST BE DONE. FRENCH HAVE OPTED ALONE FOR PRODUCING A DRAFT CONCLUDING DOCUMENT THAT WOULD REPRESENT A NEW "EQUILIBRIUM" OF PROPOSALS PREVIOUSLY MADE. ON INITIATIVE OF GISCARD, WHO, WITH AN EYE PROBABLY ON UPCOMING FRENCH ELECTIONS, SENT A MID-WEEK PERSONAL MESSAGE TO BREZHNEV, FRENCH DEL TABLED PAPER FEBRUARY 17. THERE WAS ONLY MINIMAL CONSULTATION IN EC-9 AND NATO CAUCUSES. PAPER HAS A STRONG HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT, BUT IS WEAKER THAN NNA PAPER ON BASKET THREE HUMAN CONTACTS AND ON ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE (AS WELL AS ON CBMS). FRENCH SAY THAT THEY CONSIDER THEIR INITIATIVE HAS NO MORE THAN ONE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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1,000 CHANCE OF GETTING NEGOTIATIONS GOING, BUT THAT CONTINUED DEADLOCK WOULD BE BAD FOR DETENTE AND SOMEONE HAD TO MAKE EFFORT. SOVIETS RECEIVED FRENCH DRAFT POLITELY AND PROMISED TO RESPOND SUBSTANTIVELY AFTER IT WAS STUDIED BY MOSCOW.

5. REST OF ALLIED CAUCUS HAS BEEN WORKING ON A DIFFERENT TACK. WE HAVE AGREED ON A DRAFT CONCLUDING DOCUMENT THAT IN MANY WAYS WOULD BE MORE A POSITION PAPER THAN A NEGOTIATING PROPOSAL. WHILE MODERATE IN TONE AND REFLECTING A NUMBER OF COMPROMISES, IT IS INTENDED TO BE SEVERAL NOTCHES ABOVE BOTH NNA AND FRENCH DRAFTS, PARTICULARLY IN HUMAN RIGHTS, HUMAN CONTACTS, ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND IMPLEMENTATION AREAS. IT SEEKS TO MAKE A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS FOR WHICH ALLIES HAVE BEEN WORKING THROUGHOUT BELGRADE MEETING AND BY ITS COMPREHENSIVE AND MODERATE TONE INDICATE TO NNA TYPE OF AGENDA THAT WE BELIEVE MADRID MEETING SHOULD HAVE. ALLIES HAVE AGREED THAT FRENCH DRAFT SHOULD HAVE A FEW DAYS RUN AND THAT, AFTER SOVIETS HAVE GIVEN REJECTION, ALLIED

PAPER SHOULD BE TABLED WITH BROAD CONSPONSORSHIP FEBRUARY
21. US AND THE EC-9 PRESIDENT, DENMARK, WOULD BE COPROPOSERS.

6. WHILE BELGRADE MEETING APPEARS TO BE WINDING
DOWN, THERE ARE STILL A GREAT MANY IMPONDERABLES. ONE

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OF THE MOST BASIC IS THAT NO ONE QUITE KNOWS HOW TO LET
GO OF IT. NEITHER SIDE WISHES TO BE ONE THAT BEARS ONUS
OF SAYING IN SO MANY WORDS THAT A SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUDING
DOCUMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE AND IT IS NOW TIME TO WRAP UP
MEETING WITH BRIEF "WE CAME, WE MET, WE WILL MEET AGAIN"
COMMUNIQUE. THAT TIME MAY WELL COME SOON, BUT IT IS
NOT HERE YET. NNA ARE STILL PONDERING WHETHER THEY SHOULD
TABLE THEIR FEBRUARY 1 PROPOSAL FORMALLY AND LET IT
STAND AS RECORD OF WHAT THEY SOUGHT TO DO OR WHETHER THEY
SHOULD MAKE NEW EFFORT TO FIND WORKABLE FORMULA. REVISION
OF CBM PORTION OF PAPER WHICH THEY HAVE FLOATED IS INDICATION
THAT THEY MAY GO IN LATTER DIRECTION. IT GOES
SOME WAY TOWARD SOVIET POSITION, THOUGH PROBABLY NOT ENOUGH
TO MAKE IT ACCEPTABLE TO EAST. STILL, IT POINTS TO A DANGER
THAT NNA MIGHT, TO AVOID APPEARANCE OF BELGRADE FAILURE,
OFFER SOVIETS SO MANY CONCESSIONS THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT
FOR ALLIES TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THEIR INITIATIVE.
IF SOVIETS DO NOT REJECT FRENCH PROPOSAL OUT OF HAND BUT
SEEK TO NEGOTIATE IT DOWN, THIS DANGER COULD BE FURTHER

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EXACERBATED. FRENCH SAY THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY PUT IN MINIMUM FORMULATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, HUMAN CONTACTS AND IMPLEMENTATION AND THAT THEY WILL NOT NEGOTIATE DOWN ON THESE ESSENTIALS. ALL ALLIES INSIST THAT THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT AN ANODYNE DOCUMENT, BUT, WITH SKILL, SOVIETS COULD YET CREATE A GRAY AREA DOCUMENT ABOUT WHICH ALLIES AND NNA COULD DIFFER IN THEIR ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER IT HAD JUST ENOUGH SUBSTANCE TO BE PREFERABLE TO COMMUNIQUE.

7. IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN WESTERN CAMP'S DETERMINATION NOT TO ACCEPT AN ANODYNE DOCUMENT, WE HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZING THAT WHILE WE ARE PREPARED TO WORK AS LONG AND HARD AS NECESSARY TO PRODUCE A SUBSTANTIVE DOCUMENT, NATURE OF DOCUMENT IS NOT TEST OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF MEETING. IN EFFECT, MEETING HAS ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED ITS MAIN OBJECTIVE: TO GET LONG-TERM PROCESS OF PERIODIC REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FINAL ACT UNDERWAY. ALLIES CARRIED OUT FRANK REVIEW ALL FALL, AND THERE IS CONSENSUS THAT NEXT MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN MADRID, PROBABLY SOMETIME IN 1980. ONLY WAY THIS BASIC SUCCESS COULD BE CALLED INTO QUESTION WOULD BE IF SOVIETS SUCCEEDED IN PRODUCING AN OSTENSIBLY SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT THAT INCLUDED NO MENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THAT WOULD AMOUNT TO AN EXPUNGING OF THE AUTUMN RECORD AND AN IMPLICATION THAT WHAT WEST HAD BEEN DOING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN CSCE HAS BEEN REJECTED FOR FUTURE. A DOCUMENT THAT INCLUDES HUMAN RIGHTS -- WHICH SOVIETS SAY THEY WILL NEVER ACCEPT AND GIVE EVERY APPEARANCE OF MEANING IT -- OR A COMMUNIQUE THAT NOTES A THOROUGH REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION WAS HELD AND THAT NEXT ONE WILL BE IN TWO YEARS TIME WOULD AMOUNT TO AN IMPLICIT ACCEPTANCE THAT OUR APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS IS A LEGITIMATE PART OF

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CSCE AND THE DETENTE PROCESS.
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